

Pointes of Fall

Fall 2011

Being Blessed

In looking forward to the upcoming Thanksgiving Holiday, one of the fondest memories I have as a child is being in the kitchen with my Aunt Doris preparing the dressing for Thanksgiving dinner. It takes some preparation, but is well worth it. Our family always gathered from all areas around Oklahoma for both Thanksgiving and Christmas and our house was always filled with people, so massive amounts of food were prepared. As I became an adult, I wanted to continue that tradition. I like to surround myself with people during the holidays, if not with immediate family, I like to volunteer for local organizations. I help feed food to the less fortunate people by preparing the meals as well as serve them. Food is something that has a therapeutic effect for me. I love the preparation, the way it smells when it's cooking, and I love to see the enjoyment on peoples faces when they eat.



I will be starting a new journey in life this year and I will be alone for the holidays for the first time. I am making

arrangements to visit some friends as well as contact some organizations in town to help serve food again this year to keep busy. In my opinion, the holidays should be something to cherish. The holidays are for surrounding yourself with people you care about and count your many blessing and this year I am truly blessed.



I thought I would also share my Aunt Doris's dressing recipe. Give it a try and you'll make everyone smile!

Ingredients:

2 boxes Jiffy Cornbread
1 bunch Celery
1 onion
2 tbs butter
2 loaves white bread, cubed
Sage, add to taste
Turkey neck, giblets, livers
Chicken Broth
Other veggies, as desired

Directions:

Bake cornbread mix as directed a day in advance. Cut the bread into cubes a day prior and put into a bowl. Cover lightly with paper towel overnight. The day you make the dressing, take the turkey parts (neck, giblets, liver) out, place in a pot, cover parts with water and boil to make the broth. Discard the parts when done. Slice celery thinly and dice

onions into small pieces and sauté with the butter. Add the sautéed vegetables, crumbed corn bread, sage, and bread together in a large bowl. Slowly add your turkey broth until moistened and stir thoroughly (don't want it to be soupy). Add chicken broth if needed. Pour the dressing into a large oven safe casserole dish and bake for 1 hours at 350°.

Enjoy with your family for the Holidays!

~L... P.



Choices Chances Changes

When I take the time to look back on my life, I can pinpoint the major decisions which made me who I am today. Did I know when a life changing leap of faith was at hand? I would say, for the most part, no. So why am I able to see the past with 20/20 vision? Will I ever reach a point in my life when I can say, without any reservations, that I just made the correct decision? For me, my choices are just that, my choices. I have had other people influence my path, some for good, and others for bad.

I am obviously not an expert in choosing the paths that would have made my life more fulfilling and peaceful. I will, however, share my experience and what my motivations were.

As a child, the whole world was at my finger tips. An endless flow of possibilities fueled by an attitude that, no matter what the dream was, I would someday fall into it with little or no effort. I just wanted it, period. I only had to conquer time. As birthdays clicked by and dreams piled up, the future looked like I had life by the tail. I thought to myself “the world is mine for the taking.” I somehow believed that I was owed greatness; I am just that special of a person. I wanted to be scooped up by mother earth as she rotated on her axis. My dreams sounded quite obtainable. I wanted to be a professional football player, a world class motorcycle racer, a star in a famous rock band, a devout Catholic, have many many close friends, and, of course, be married to a beautiful woman living in a stunning house (yes, that too, is what I wanted at the age of 12. Women would take one look at me and fall in love!!). It really looked like I was going to be a very busy, important person; the world needed a guy like me. My intention for disclosing these very personal dreams was to make fun of them. They are selfish with little or no plan of how to could achieve such a lofty existence. However, as I write this, something occurred to me, all of the dreams I had early in my life were very, very positive. I had every right to want the beauty and joy that was waiting for me. As I grew, the reality of life became more clear. My goals and happiness would not fall into my lap. I then knew I would have to take responsibility for finding my way.

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“The fear of all fears is the fear of fears fear.”

~Jl



Why I like to Read Books

When I was young I remember my mom reading to me. It was wonderful. I thought of all these stories in the books and it was amazing that somebody could write so many words on a piece of paper.

When I started school I could not read very well. I didn't go to kindergarten so I was slow. The school told my mom that they wanted to hold me back in 1st grade. My mom told them “no.” She knew a lady that was a retired teacher; her name was Jane Hathaway. I went to her house throughout the summer to learn to read, spell and do my math. By the end of the summer, I could read pretty well. Since that day I have loved reading. It was the greatest present that I ever received from my mom and her love.

P.S. – if you want to kill some time, pick up a book! You won't regret it.

~ D.D.W.



An Interview with Mary Jane Gruba, Program Director at Adult Residential

J – What brought you to CenterPointe?

MJ – I had a change of jobs after 23 years. I needed a job, and CenterPointe was hiring so I worked here. I worked with kids before. Working here was kind of a fluke, but I enjoy it a lot.

J – What did you do before working at CenterPointe?

MJ - I worked with kids and families at the Child Guidance Center.

J- What do you like most about your job?

MJ – It never stops being a challenge so you always have to keep learning. You can never really get bored.

J- What is the most unusual thing you've seen in your career?

MJ – We had a program for adolescent male sex offenders and while they were in our building, one of the men waited in the women's rest room for women to come in. He got caught.

J- Do you like what you do?

MJ – Yes, very much.

J – What is your favorite coping skill?

MJ – My current favorite is Radical Acceptance which we have been using in DBT a lot. It's just accepting what is.

J – What's your favorite color?

MJ – Green

J – What do you like to do in your free time?

MJ – I really like to crochet. I enjoy walking and playing with my granddaughter. I also like watching old movies.

J – Do you have any pets?

MJ – Yes, cats. [Shows a picture of her two cats].

~J



Some Things That We Are Grateful For

DDW – my health

L P – my sobriety

N C – Skidmore

J – my mother

J.M. – my life

M J – my kids

S – to be clean today

T – peers, friends, family, children and freedom

P – my family, Jesse and sobriety

K – my family, friends, kids and God

L W. – for God, mother nature, my wife and family

S – my family

Anon. – second chances

Anon. – the GLIDE program

T – my family

B: – my neighbors

~B



Poetry



a black mist

Words, words, words, come to me
Fill my brain in this time of need
This is urgent can't you see?
Words, words, words, come to me

My head needs some cleansing,
my conscience needs some
attending for my hands are
a'shaking, and my heart is
a'beating
Its pace stays frantic
No it's true this in not an antic

I need what's between my ears to
flow,
To bleed out onto the paper
My current state of mind has
gone on for far too long,
It refuses to taper

Off in the distance, or to some far-
away world, this depressive
mindset has dominated my brain
for years on end

Breaths are heavy and my feet
aren't steady it appears that I
may not be ready to walk this
earth with a smile

Despite this overwhelming
face, my mind stays intact
(somehow), knowing that if I
take the wrong turn on this
crossroad that I find myself
at,
That I will most certainly die

For it was only 5 short
months ago that I laid,
dressed in a hospital gown,
with my heart literally beating
out of my chest, and as I lay
there, with a heart monitor
beeping as fast and as loudly
as possible that,
I left my body

Now I was watching myself from
above, and as a thick black mist
developed all around my body, a
voice as clear as day asked me;
“do you want to stay, or do you
want to go?”

And I replied back: “I want to
stay.”

Instantly I returned to my body

And here I am, 5 months later,
jotting down similar things as I did
back then, but know that I am
fighting, so fucking hard I am
fighting, to get through my days,
to wake up and want to get out of
bed, to want to be in public, to get
my head out of a book and
actually socialize with people

For you see, all of those things
have been foreign to me for far
too long, and simply need to man
up, to man up, grow up, and
fucking do something with my life
other than bouncing from
treatment center to treatment
center, and writing depressing
poems.

So tomorrow, when I awake, I will
reluctantly take the covers off, get
up, and go on with my day...

(and try to smile)

~N C.



Artwork by N C.



Dreams of Mine

My minds been a racing,
I just feel like pacing
And I've been chasing
These dreams of mine.

It's time to make things right,
I'll continue to put up a fight,
I think it's possible, I even might
Find these dreams of mine.

I'll forgive myself for all I've
done,
Hoping one day to see the sun,
And I'll no longer have to run,
From these dreams of mine.

I've found a place to call home,
I no longer have to roam,
From all that goes on in my
dome.

I've found these dreams of mine.

~ S



Recipes



Candied Sweet Potatoes

Ingredients:

4 pounds sweet potatoes, quartered
1 ¼ C margarine
1 ¼ C brown sugar
3 C mini marshmallows
Ground cinnamon, to taste
Ground nutmeg, to taste

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 400° and grease a 9x13 baking dish. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add the potatoes. Boil until slightly undone (approx. 15 min.). Drain, cool and

peel. In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine margarine, brown sugar, 2 cups of marshmallows, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the marshmallows have melted. Stir potatoes into marshmallow sauce. While stirring, mash about half of the potatoes, and break the others into bite sized chunks. Transfer to prepared baking dish. Bake in preheated oven for 15 minutes. Remove from oven and cover top evenly with remaining marshmallows. Return to oven and bake until marshmallows are golden brown. Enjoy!

~ C



“To drink is to die. Today
I chose life!”

~ J



Cream Corn & Oyster Casserole

Ingredients:

2 cans cream corn
2 cans hole oysters
1 pkg butter flavored Ritz crackers
4 tbs butter, softened
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Start by preheating the oven to 350°. Open all the cans and drain the oysters. Crush one whole package of Ritz crackers into rough crumbs. Mix salt, pepper, butter, oysters and cream corn together in a large bowl. This dish is better made in a bread pan.

Transfer the mix into a bread pan and bake in the oven for 35-40 minutes. The casserole is done when heated all the way through. It should jiggle a bit like jello when the pan is shaken lightly. Enjoy!

~ J



The Tweetest Thing Ever

It was Japan's stunning victory over the United States in the World Cup. Their first major soccer title. It set the world record for the most tweets per second: 7,196. That's more than the Super Bowl on February 6, 2011 (4,064), more than the 2011 New Years celebration in Japan May 2nd (6,939), and more than the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton in London on April 29, 2011 (3,968). And, it also beat the number of Tweets about the death of Osama Bin Laden.

~ D.D.W.

“Be the change that you want to see in the world.” ~Gandhi

Artwork by L. W.



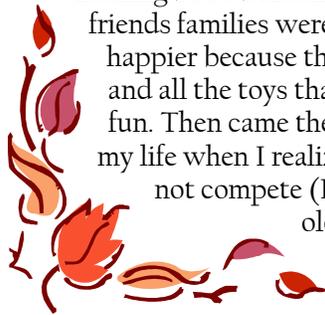


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I have always been a hard worker at every job I've had. Money became the most important measuring stick of my happiness and accomplishments. Every time I received a raise I did not think of myself as an asset to whoever I was working for, rather I would tell myself that I, in fact, deserved more money. I have had many raises in my life, but they never made me happy. If I could only make a little more I would have the one resource I needed to achieve all of the wonderful things in my life. Yes, money is the answer.



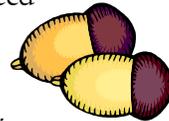
Little did I know I was making a fatal mistake. In my teens I began to compare myself with others. They were either better or worse than me; money became a very destructive force in my life. As I became seduced by material possessions, I began to look at my journey through life with a very unhealthy viewpoint. I became filled with two of the most destructive forces a person can have: greed and jealousy. At the time I saw no problem, I needed a way to become competitive: I get mine, you get yours so stay out of my way. Yes, I'm on the right track. I have this thing called life all figured out. I thought I was the only person on earth that made my own way through life; everyone else had help. As I saw it, my family was poor, my parents relationship was terrible and the children were nothing but a burden. All of my friends families were so much happier because they had money and all the toys that made life fun. Then came the moment in my life when I realized I could not compete (I was 18 years old). I gave up trying to find happiness



with money. I was a failure. All the rules I had spent my life learning did not deliver. I needed to find another way to be validated and accepted.

After close consideration, the gravity of drugs and alcohol began to pull me into what I thought was the best answer to my problems. I had been using since I was 15 years old, I always had a good time with very fun people. It seemed that even though they had no money they were still happy. I quickly bonded with other users, we were tight. Life was great. People loved to hang out with me. My admission to a fulfilling and meaningful life was simply a pocket full of drugs and a desire to share.

Ok, fast forward 20 years. Everything was going great, marriage, money, ego and friends. However, I needed y addiction to fuel my happiness. The demand to keep content was growing; I had to use more and more drugs and alcohol just to make it through the day. I had to become numb. At that time, I was 100% convinced that I was making the right decisions.



Then after 30 years of living the dream, as you can probably guess, the end came. I will not go into gory details, but I will say that everything was impossible, except my ability to continue to drain the life out of myself.

My state of mind at that point was tenuous at best. So, have I learned anything? Yeah, but not enough to make it on my own. I still have many old beliefs that, for whatever reason, I still hold on to. I'm working on that. Life is very hard for me now. Is it too late to change and make wise decisions for myself? I got nothing, no answers. I am starting to think that there are really no concrete answers. One

thing that I do know is that if I make a poor decision, I need to address it as soon as possible. Do not blow it off. Talk to people. Become humble. I will make mistakes, I am human. I'm free; I can make my own reality.

Certain songs and works of art influence me. I try to keep them in mind to give me hope. The Grateful Dead sing a song called "Saint of Circumstance." There are two lines in the lyrics that are in my mind every day. It really, really helps me get through: "Sure don't know what I'm going for, I'm gonna go for it for sure."

Peace!

-Anon.



The following affirmation is taken from "Pocketful of Miracles" by Joan Borysenko, Ph.D.

The process of self-forgiveness is complete when we let go of what we have done and celebrate what we have become. The process of forgiving others is complete when we let go of what they have done and celebrate the wisdom we have gained through the difficult experience they have facilitated for us. We can claim our freedom independently of their actions. Likewise, the decision to forgive specifies no particular action on our part. We may decide not to see or speak to a hurtful person again. Forgiveness is an attitude of mind rather than a particular action.



